

Committee on Government Reform

Tom Davis, Chairman



MEDIA ADVISORY

**For Immediate Release
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Government Reform Committee to Review School Choice in the District of Columbia

What: Government Reform Committee Hearing: *"In Search of Educational Excellence in the Nation's Capital: A Review of Academic Options for Students and Parents in the District of Columbia"*

When: Friday, May 9, 2003, 11:00 a.m.

Where: Room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building

Background:

This hearing will examine strategies to improve academic performance and explore plans to enhance educational opportunities in the District of Columbia.

The condition of District of Columbia schools continues to be a concern for the Administration and Congress. D.C. schools have been slow in improving test scores, and special education costs have soared. In the President's proposed FY 2004 budget, \$756 million was allocated for school choice programs, of which \$75 million would be used to fund seven to eight pilot scholarship programs across the country, including one in the District of Columbia. The goal of this proposal is not to take resources away from public or charter schools, but rather to provide additional federal funds to make sure District students get the best education possible. Congress needs to once again explore whether there is a need for federal legislation to address education performance and school choice in the District of Columbia.

Panel One Witnesses:

Congressman Jeff Flake (R-AZ)

Congressman Elijah Cummings (D-MD)

Panel Two Witness:

Dr. Eugene Hickok, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education

Panel Three Witnesses:

The Honorable Anthony Williams, Mayor, District of Columbia

The Honorable Linda Cropp, Chairman, District of Columbia Council

The Honorable Kevin Chavous, Chairman, Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation, District of Columbia Council

Panel Four Witnesses:

Peggy Cooper Cafritz, President, District of Columbia Board of Education

Josephine Baker, Executive Director, District of Columbia Public Charter School Board

Casey Lartigue Jr., Education Policy Analyst, The Cato Institute

Dr. Helen Ladd, Researcher, Duke University

Jackie Pinckney, Public School Parent, Jefferson Junior High School

Iris Toyer, Transformation School Parent, Stanton Elementary School

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